

## On World Maritime Day, UN official urges tribute to seafarers



IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos

23 September 2010 – The head of the United Nations agency mandated to ensure the safety of the shipping industry today urged the world to recognize the important role played by seafarers in international maritime trade and make efforts to improve their unique working lives.

Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, the Secretary-General of the UN International Maritime Organization (**IMO**), used his message for World Maritime Day to draw attention to the maritime workers, whose efforts, he **said**, went largely unacknowledged.

Mr. Mitropoulos urged members of the shipping industry to maintain high standards; enshrine best practices; embrace corporate social responsibility; provide a clean, safe and comforting workplace; recognize and adequately reward those worked for them.

In addition, he called on political leaders to work towards the ratification, entry into force and implementation of all the international measures that have a bearing on seafarers' safety and security.

Legislators and law enforcers should strive to treat seafarers fairly, while port and immigration authorities had the responsibility to treat them with respect.

"To the 1.5 million seafarers of the world: the entire maritime community appreciates you and your indispensable services; is aware of the conditions under which you operate; shows compassion for the sacrifices you make; does care for you; and works to ensure your safety and security, praying that you always have calm seas, fair winds and a safe return home," Mr. Mitropoulos said.

While IMO celebrates World Maritime Day every year, the exact date is left to individual Governments but is usually celebrated during the last week in September. The Day is used to focus attention on the importance of shipping safety, maritime security and the marine environment and to emphasize a particular aspect of IMO's work.

The Day is being celebrated at the agency's London headquarters today. In addition, Argentina will host this year's 2010 IMO World Maritime Day Parallel Event, with celebrations in Buenos Aires on 7 and 8 October, including a seminar on the first day, followed by the unveiling of a Plaque in Honour of the Seafarer on the second.

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